

Record of the Republican Road Building

By Theodore L. Holman.

IN the discussion of state issues, the Republican stump speakers and editors can do no better than to confine themselves to the record of Republican rule in Utah. It matters little what the opposition promises to the people—campaign promises are as cheap as they are common; but it is important that from now until election day the opportunity be overlooked to contrast Democratic promises with Republican performances. The people of Utah are sensible and sound in their ideas of public policy, and no better appeal can possibly be made to them than to tell the true story of Republican achievements. And if, perhaps, our Republican candidates and advocates feel that they must promise the people something, then they should confine their promises to a continuation of the constructive policies which have done so much for the uplift of the people and the upbuilding of the state.

Chief amongst the constructive policies instituted by the Republican party in the state is that of permanent road construction work. Eight years ago the public roads were in a deplorable condition. Nothing substantial had been done to remedy the situation. It was the custom at each session of the legislature to make small special appropriations to the several counties for road building purposes, but without due regard for permanent construction. In 1909 a Republican administration sensed the urgent need for state aid in this direction, and inaugurated permanent road construction work on a substantial scale.

By act of a Republican legislature a state road commission was created; a standard system of permanent road building was established, and provisions were made for the designation of a state road system that would eventually serve all localities. A heavy appropriation was made to start this work, and a permanent annual appropriation fixed by law. This appropriation has been substantially increased at subsequent sessions of the legislature. Moreover, in addition to the expenditure of the state funds specified, it was provided by law that the several counties should bear an equitable portion of the cost of the proposed work, both by direct appropriation from the county funds and by a special tax levy (not to exceed 5 mills), for permanent road improvements. The use of convict labor on the public roads was also authorized.

The undertaking was popular from the start. The citizens welcomed the movement, the counties gave cordial co-operation, and the road commission diligently pursued its object. Every effort was concentrated in this great constructive work with the result that the state road system now reaches out to all corners of the state. Approximately 2,900 miles of public highway have already been designated and made a part of the state system. Under the direction of the state officers some 1,800 miles of road have been graded and put in splendid shape for ordinary usage. Over 600 miles have been shaped and surfaced and come under the classification of permanent construction. By the close of the current year, with the work now under way, the state system will include 35 miles of concrete road and 20 miles of macadam. To date, the records of the commission show that upwards of 4,800 culverts have been laid and some 400 bridges erected. Included in the latter are 40 steel and 81 concrete bridges, all of modern and substantial design. Two large bridges have been built across the Green river, and one each across the Grand, Sevier, San Juan and Price rivers, respectively, all at a cost of upwards of \$100,000.

In connection with the state road system,

the Midland Trail has been established and improved and the Pioneer Route perpetuated. All told, by the close of 1916, the state will have appropriated and expended upwards of \$1,100,000 of its own funds for the permanent construction of highways and bridges. Of this amount, the sum of \$260,000 was raised by a bond issue and distributed equally amongst twenty-six of the counties (Salt Lake county excepted), and the balance was set apart from the general funds of the state. Add to this amount the funds derived from the several counties and the grand total appropriated will approximate \$3,250,000. According to the records of the state road commission, the close of the current year will see the work listed above all completed and paid for, and there will be upwards of \$400,000 available of the total funds set forth above for further work next year.

Utah is still in her infancy and her finances are limited. In view of this, the permanent road construction work already accomplished assumes gigantic proportions. The expenditure of two and three quarter million dollars on the roads is a monument to the enterprise and efficiency of the Republican party. This is especially significant because every dollar was used to the best advantage, and every effort made to assist the smaller counties and the outlying sections. The Republican party deserves and should be given full credit for inaugurating and pushing to partial completion this great public project. It needs no better campaign argument.

OUR MULTIFARIOUS COMMISSIONS

They Are Political Machines Which are Consuming the Substance of the People.

Whatever else they are, there will be none to deny that every one of our appointed state boards and commissions are political machines whose members spend prodigious amounts of time paid for by the taxpayers, to say nothing of the cost of "official" trips so planned as to put the right man in the right place when needed—and all to promote the political fortunes of the appointing power.

Few realize what these commissions cost. It appears that the Railroad Commission alone cost the people of the state \$670,000 for the last fiscal year.

Its main work is in settling quarrels between localities and industries and in furnishing investors with information which they would otherwise have to pay for themselves or go without.

Why should the taxpayers pay nearly three-quarters of a million dollars a year for those purposes?

The number of individuals who get any benefit whatever from the operations of the Railroad Commission is infinitesimal. They do not affect the price which consumers pay for anything. They do very little, except gather data for investors, which would not get done if there were no such commission, and probably get done just as well.

And, like all the other commissions, it is a hotbed of politics.

It does not pay the people to tax themselves so heavily to accomplish such work as the commission does. And, even if there were pecuniary gain, it would be far outweighed by the moral injury involved in supporting such a powerful personal political machine at the taxpayers' expense. Six hundred and seventy thousand dollars a year is a lot of money to spend for such a purpose.

Doubtless, the Railroad Commission costs the

people more than any other single commission, but all the others measure up to the full limit of their opportunities. We have a government of commissions and by commissions and for commissions. The Railroad Commission is merely the most costly of the lot.

All that is necessary or desirable to be accomplished by all these commissions can be done at a vastly smaller cost to the taxpayers.—San Francisco Chronicle.

The Democracy take great credit for their enlargement of the rural postal service. That is like them. They fought the original measure with all their might, but it became a law, and since then the carriers alone have received \$53,000,000 for their services in delivering the mails in the rural district.

A schoolmaster in a rural council school was recently giving a lesson to the lowest standards on the formation of rain by the process of evaporation.

"You will notice," said he, "that during the evening following a hot summer day something rises from the surface of the ponds. What is it?"

One solitary hand gradually creeps up.

"Good boy, I can see you are thinking. What is it?"

G. B.—"Frogs."—Exchange.

New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts appear to be responsible for putting the rage in suffrage.—Columbia State.

Greece is like the fellow who prefers being called a coward to having it said of him. "Doesn't he look natural?"—Albany Journal.

Even though he favors equal suffrage, the president believes that woman's place is in the White House.—Philadelphia North American.

You have to hand it to nature for making arms and legs almost as good as those now being contrived for maimed soldiers.—Washington Post.

Have a Heart.—Somebody wrote to a press clipping bureau recently and asked them kindly to furnish clippings from all the American papers of all the articles published during the last year in regard to the European war.—St. Louis Star.

The beautiful spirit of forgiveness is being exemplified by Mr. Hughes toward those stubborn Oregonians who, despite his protest from the bench, instructed for him at their primaries.—Minneapolis Tribune.

Mr. Ford's announcement that the touring car may now be purchased for \$360 f. o. b. Detroit seems to be the most widely popular declaration of principles he has made lately.—Columbus, Ohio, State Journal.

"Henry," said the sheriff to the negro on the gallows, "have you anything to say?" "Yas, suh," said the condemned man; "I've got a few words to say. I merely wishes to state dat dis suttlinly is going to be a lesson to me."—New Orleans Picayune.

The rather pathetic thing about it is that the candidate never seems to realize that he could say substantially the same things about his own party that he does about the other and have them just as truthful.—Columbus, Ohio, State Journal.

Professor Hugo Munsterberg predicts a triple alliance between Germany, England, and the United States, but Mark Twain still ranks as America's leading humorist.—Nashville Southern Lumberman.